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# .. Let's give hoops a horselaugh

**B**ecause basketball is a fast-paced, high-energy game, it lends itself to a unique environment. An enclosed arena, filled to the brim with rambunctious fans overlooking the high-speed action on the court and incensed by high-energy music, creates a thrilling, undecipherable frenzy. It's similar to cramming people who have overdosed on Vivarin into a jail cell while blaring techno dance music. "It's fantastic."

But anyone who attends a basketball game at G. Rollie White Coliseum is cheated out of this unequalled experience. The stands are always empty, the Aggie Band never plays stadium music and the yell leaders insist on making the dreadful situation worse.

To revitalize the nonexistent basketball environment at A&M, the causes of the problem must be addressed.

## Hello, Is There Anybody Out There?

Let's start with the fans. Back in Ol' Army, G. Rollie White Coliseum was known as the 'Holler House.' The name came as a result of the thousands, 7,500 to be exact, of rowdy fans who filled the bleachers each home game, creating an intense decibel level. Why anyone continues to refer to the now empty and deafening silent facade by its outdated alias is beyond reason.

During the '90s, the Aggies have averaged just over 3,000 fans per game. This putrid amount doesn't even equate to half-capacity. The Aggie fans have mustered only two sellouts in the past seven seasons. The so-called Twelfth Man only rears its ugly head when the loathed Longhorns come to town.

Compare those numbers with the attendance figures of universities who actually have basketball fans. Since 1984, raucous Blue Devils have faithfully filled the stands of Duke University's Cameron Indoor Stadium to its 9,314 capacity.

The University of North Carolina averages over 20,000 in the '90s. The Tarheels sold out the Dean E. Smith Center (21,572) more than 50 times this decade alone. Both of these

## Sportswriter



**Jamie Burch**  
Senior speech  
communication major

schools' enrollments are far less than A&M's approximate 43,000 students, none of whom are basketball fans.

A&M fans are not only sparse, they are ignorant. Of the nine people who attend Aggie basketball games, eight know absolutely nothing about the sport. The only time the G. Rollie Rowdies appear to have some clue as to how to

respond is during the Aggie War Hymn and yells.

During the War Hymn, these nine rise to their feet and mindlessly clap to the beat, as if in a drunken stupor. The zombies stand emotionless with a glazed look in their eyes, keeping up with the slow, methodical beat. Once the band finishes the final stanza, the mindless wonders sit back down. It seems to be the only logical thing to do. God forbid they work themselves back into a frenzy.

face block can bring the sleeping masses to their feet.

The solution starts with the student body filling the stands. A&M fans — start with the Aggie's last home game of the season against Baylor University Saturday. And when given the opportunity to cheer, do it. Make so much noise that even the players riding the Aggie bench get tired of hearing you. Better yet, make so much noise that the yell leaders will not be able to stifle the crowd to start a yell.

## Marching To The Beat Of Their Own Drum

Another cause of boredom at Aggie basketball games is the Aggie Band. When attending any other basketball game in the country, college or pro, you'll hear upbeat, fast-paced, high-pitched music blaring from a band or public address system. The tempo and feel of the music further adds to the excitement of the environment. But in Aggieland, the band has a slight-



The same result emerges after a yell. The crowd is silenced so the control freaks in white can synchronize a cheer. Once the yell is finished, the oblivious fans sit back down. Apparently, they have never watched or attended another collegiate or professional basketball game.

Often times nothing will incite the stale crowd. Not even an alley-oop, a slam dunk, or an in-your-

ly different way of 'adding to the environment.'

Just when A&M puts together a scoring run which forces the opponent to take a time out, the few fans in the stands go nuts. The Aggie Band then begins playing its rendition of *Patton*, immediately killing the frenzied environment.

Marching music is the perfect accompaniment for a football game. In football, the teams march up and

down the field in a battle on the iron. The slow tempo of marching music helps to paint a metaphorical picture of a battlefield.

But in basketball, marching music serves no purpose but to defuse fan excitement. The dragging, maddening tempo dulls the fans into a transient sleep. The decibel level drops and the momentum ceases.

Col. Ray Toler, Director of Bands, said the Aggie Band experimented with dance music, but quit after a survey of students found the student body disliking the new style. The questionnaires raised: Why hasn't the Aggie Band taken a survey in recent years?

To answer this inquiry, a survey by yours truly showed the student body does not appreciate the current practice of playing marching music.

Col. Toler also said the Aggie Band does not have many of the instruments needed to play techno or stadium music. But do they call themselves a nationally renowned band if they do not have the proper equipment? Music that any other college band in the country can play?

Either the Aggie Band should make another attempt at playing more upbeat style of music or athletic department should find someone who can and will.

## Hump It, A-G-G-I-E-S

The problem is further compounded by the yell leaders. In the course of a basketball game, there are numerous time-outs. The timeouts should be filled with the mentioned fast-tempo, high-energy music. The crowd frenzy creates a result of the action on the floor should not be halted so the yell leaders can count off a yell. What exactly need do the yell leaders need fulfill? Why must they quiet the crowd for the Ags to hump?

My suggestion is the yell leaders should attend a basketball game at Kansas or Duke. Let them observe how the home crowd begins the 'Rock Chalk Jayhawk' chant with any guidance. Let them observe how the Dukies appear to make a stadium move as they jump up and down on the bleachers, without someone directing them.

To remedy this ill, we need to get the yell leaders out of G. Rollie White Coliseum. If you consider yourself a basketball fan, transfer schools. If you have insomnia, visit G. Rollie to cure it. But if you consider yourself an Aggie, start attending the games. Demand more bang for your money.

## Pedophile ring rocks Maple Leaf

TORONTO (AP) — In an alleged sex abuse scandal to jolt Canada hockey, an alleged pedophile ring of Maple Leaf Gardens employees lured dozens of boys into sex offers of tickets, hockey sticks and autographs.

One alleged victim says he was part of the sex ring from 1975 to 1982, in which group took place in the back room of the building — one of hockey's most renowned arenas — several times during Toronto Maple Leafs games.

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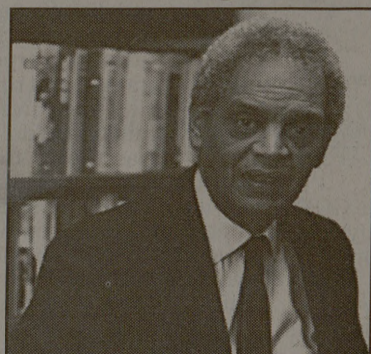
to the new  
1997-98 Aggie Hostess Coordinators

Head Coordinator- Tonya Moreland  
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We hope you have a great year!  
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**Roger Wilkins**

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## LOWRANCE

Continued from Page 7

Lowrance saw A&M in a way most college students around the country see their schools, as a place to learn, make friends and have fun.

"I'm not really an Aggie the way you would think of one," he said. "But some of my good friends are."

Lowrance said he has had discussions about his feelings with his die-hard Aggie friends.

"They realize that some things aren't for everybody," he said. "I don't like to do that stuff, so I don't, and they respect my opinions."

With all that behind him, Lowrance has become the Aggies' top performer in the shot put. Assistant coach Juan De La Garza said Lowrance adds a different dimension to the men's throwing team.

"Mike is more intense than any other thrower we

have," De La Garza said. "That's what makes him unique." De La Garza said Lowrance's ability to step up his level of performance in tough meets is another of his attributes.

"His best marks have come in meets where the competition has been the toughest," he said.

This season, Lowrance said he would like to qualify for the NCAA Championships, a goal he originally set for his senior year. He is looking to this weekend's Big 12 Championships as a step towards that goal.

"I feel like everything will click right this weekend and I will be able to hit 60 feet in the shot," he said.

Looking back on his decision to compete in track and not football, Lowrance said he has no regrets.

"I quit football because I wanted to participate in track," Lowrance said. "When I played in the Oil Bowl my senior year I knew it was my last game and I played as well as I could. I feel good about what I did and what I've done since then."

**"I wouldn't even consider myself a two-percenter. I don't do that much."**

Mike Lowrance  
A&M shot putter

## WHAT'S IT LIKE AT THE PLASMA CENTER?

To the staff of the Plasma Center,

I would like to start by saying thank you to each and every employee for making the past three years enjoyable in a professional, efficient and courteous environment. As a donor since 1993, I have been more than satisfied with every aspect of your operation, which allows myself and others to contribute what we can to community service, all the while being serviced by diligent, but relaxed, workers. Everyone at the Plasma Center, from those behind the front counter to the phlebotomists to the supervisors, have made great efforts to insure that each donor feels hygienically safe, as well as keeping the atmosphere light.

Like most, I started coming to the Plasma Center for monetary reasons, but I soon developed acquaintances that appealed to me almost as much as the original need for money, enabling me to look forward to each donation, not only for my wallet's sake but also to see my

friends. Like I commented to someone recently, talking to people at the Plasma Center was getting mail from a far-off friend that you don't get to do much with, but who you can talk to often as you write. For those acquaintances for your continual services. I would like to thank all of those I've come to know and appreciate over the past three years - Emily, and Tracy, Heath, Marty, Ada and Josie, etc... more I can't remember or those who have gone on to better things.

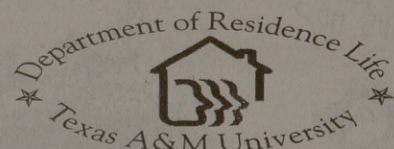
So, as I graduate from this great University, I bid you all a fond farewell and strong commendations on such a successful blend of quality medical practice and friendly service. Thank you all and have a great summer. Thanks, C. J.

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